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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/866,558	05/24/2001	Henry H. Yamamoto	20643/0203982-US0 Diego	4801
60539	7590	09/25/2006	7	
DARBY & DARBY, PC P.O. BOX 5257 NEW YORK, NY 10150-5257			EXAMINER HOYE, MICHAEL W	
			ART UNIT 2623	PAPER NUMBER

DATE MAILED: 09/25/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

1. In a telephone interview conducted on September 12, 2006, the Applicant's representative argued that the claim limitation of "automatically generating a reminder of an upcoming coupon expiration date" as described in independent claim 1 (and in a similar manner in dependent claim 22) was not addressed in the Office Action mailed on 7/7/06. Upon further review, the USPTO personnel found the Applicant's argument persuasive and came to an agreement with the Applicant's representative. Accordingly, prosecution has been reopened and new grounds of rejection are presented below.

Applicant's previous arguments filed on April 28, 2006 with respect to the claims have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection as necessitated by amendment.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 4 is objected to because of the following informalities: the claim is dependent on canceled claim 3 and should be dependent on **claim 1**. Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person

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having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 17-20, 23-27, 29, 30 and 37-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones et al (US 5,978,013), in view of Harada et al (US 20002/0120927).

Regarding claims 17 and 26, Jones discloses an apparatus, article of manufacture and method for generating product coupons in response to televised offers. Jones discloses advertising programming may offer a coupon for the product advertised (see col. 4, lines 60-65) by embedding a coupon identifier in a television video signal (see col. 4, lines 60-65). Jones still further discloses that transmitted advertising program may be broadcast by standard television (see col. 12, lines 54-57), which inherently includes a 'first channel of an interactive video casting system'. It is noted that the user can input a request on a remote control for the coupon (see col. 12, lines 25-47) providing for an interactive system.

Jones further discloses transmitting a coupon or token identifier in the blanked line and hence the same channel as the product advertisement (see col. 21, lines 63-67) to retrieve coupon information on a second distinct data channel (see col. 3, lines 1-9). It is noted that the token identifier comprises a code which links or correlates the token identifier of the advertisement displayed on the first channel to a coupon received on the second data channel (see col. 2, line 63 – col. 3, line 9; col. 5, lines 8-29 and col. 9, lines 30-48). It is noted that Jones discloses, "This token information is either transmitted to the viewer's site or pre-stored in a memory at the user's site" (see col. 3, lines 1-8).

Jones discloses a user can request or 'command' retrieval of the coupon, based on the coupon or token identification code, by inputting a command on a remote control (see col. 9, lines 21-29), which provides retrieval of the coupon on the second or data channel to allow

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printing or utilization of the coupon thus enabling a user to initiate a transaction related to the coupon on the second channel (see col. 10, lines 16-30).

It is further noted, with regards to claim 26, since the coupon or token identifier is linked or correlated with at the appropriate coupon, the coupon or token identifier on the first channel is consistent with the coupon on the second channel.

Jones further discloses, in regards to the demographic information, “*The information may include whether the site is a home or business, the number of persons at the site, their ages and sexes, their consumption habits and the classes of products in which they would likely be interested*” (see col. 9, lines 10-15). Thus Jones discloses the claimed “...the information related to the coupon on the second channel including information related to the user.”

Jones fails to disclose displaying the coupon to the user on the second channel and participating in a transaction related to the coupon displayed on the second channel.

In analogous art, Harada discloses a broadcasting system which provides a user with coupons on a separate channel see ¶ [0063 - 0064] and teaches “...*and the coupon information is displayed as a coupon visible to the user on the EPG screen 16...*” (see ¶ [0086]) and thus it is noted that Harada teaches displaying coupon information received on a second channel. Harada further teaches, “If the user decides that the coupon is unnecessary when watching the message of the DM, the coupon is cancelled, and is thus not settled (see ¶ [0096]). Harada still further teaches an object of the present invention is to “...increase the degree of freedom of issuing a coupon...” (see ¶ [0008]) and to “increase a frequency of use of coupons given to a program or the user” (see ¶ [0009]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include the claimed limitations for

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the benefit of giving the user the option of deciding if printing the coupon is necessary or not while increasing the degree of freedom of issuing a coupon and increasing the frequency of use of coupons.

Regarding claims 18-19, Jones discloses correlating by automatically entering and comparing demographic information which is related to the user which identifies the user terminal (see col. 9, lines 4-13).

Regarding claim 20, Jones discloses integrating coupon ID information relating to coupons and coupon channel in the television commercial channel sent from the interactive video casting system to the client terminal (see col. 4, line 60 - col. 5, line 27).

Regarding claim 23, Jones discloses transmitting coupons onto a smart card (see col. 2, lines 59-62) as the claimed 'instructions' are inherent as necessary to perform the claimed functions.

Regarding claim 24, Jones discloses integrating coupon ID information relating to coupons and coupon channel in the television commercial channel sent from the interactive video casting system to the client terminal (see col. 4, line 60 - col. 5, line 27) as the claimed 'instructions' are necessary to perform the claimed functions.

Regarding claim 25, the combination of Jones and Harada fails to disclose the claimed wherein the machine-readable medium further includes instructions stored thereon to allow the user to send a coupon to an email address.

Official Notice is taken it is well known for a user to send information to an email address to enable forwarding of information to a destination of user's choice. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was

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made to modify the combination of Jones and Harada to include the claimed limitation to enable a user to send the coupon to a choice destination.

Regarding claim 27, Jones discloses the claimed coupon includes merchant information (see col. 11, lines 58-63).

Regarding claim 29, it is noted that since the coupon is sent to the requesting user, Jones inherently discloses the claimed “wherein the information related to the user is obtained by obtaining a set top box identifier.”

Regarding claim 30, Jones discloses a printing device for printing and redeeming the coupon (see col. 10, lines 16-30).

Regarding claims 37 and 41, Jones discloses an apparatus, article of manufacture and method for generating product coupons in response to televised offers. Jones discloses advertising programming may offer a coupon for the product advertised (see col. 4, lines 60-65) by embedding a coupon identifier in a television video signal (see col. 4, lines 60-65). Jones still further discloses that transmitted advertising program may be broadcast by standard television (see col. 12, lines 54-57), which inherently includes a ‘first channel’ of an interactive video casting system. It is noted that the user can input a request on a remote control for the coupon (see col. 12, lines 25-47) providing for an interactive system. Jones further discloses that the commercial can be stored and retrieved from one or more optical disk sources to provide coupons for the coupon channel (see col. 6, lines 43-63). It is noted that more than one optical disks constitute a plurality of sources. Jones further discloses the coupon is affiliated with one advertiser or merchant which is in communication with the interactive video casting system (see col. 11, lines 58-65). Jones discloses the offering the coupon includes providing a plurality of

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features related to transactions that can be conducted with any of the coupons available from the coupon channel including storage of the coupon printing of the coupon, a discount amount utilized in coupon transactions and a UPC bar-code utilized in coupon transactions.

Jones discloses a user can request or 'command' retrieval of the coupon, based on the coupon or token identification code, by inputting a command on a remote control (see col. 9, lines 21-29), which provides retrieval of the coupon on the second or data channel to allow printing or utilization of the coupon thus enabling a user to initiate a transaction related to the coupon on the second channel (see col. 10, lines 16-30). It is noted that the transaction of printing is subsequent to the correlation of the received command with offered coupon.

Jones fails to disclose providing an electronic notification related to the offered coupon from the interactive video casting system subsequent to conducting the transaction, the electronic notification capable of being provided to the client terminal for display on the display screen.

Official Notice is taken it would have been notoriously well known to provide an electronic notification after a transaction of transferring data to notify and to ensure a receiver is aware that data has been transmitted. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include providing a electronic notification related to the offered coupon subsequent to the conducting the transaction to ensure the receiver is notified that the coupon has been sent and should have been received.

As discussed above, Jones discloses providing a coupon via a separate data channel, but fails to disclose the claimed electronic notification further capable of being provided on one of the channels of the interactive video casting system that is different from the coupon channel.

Based on the suggestion of Jones to transmit coupons on a separate data channel, it would have been obvious to further modify Jones to transmit the electronic notification discussed above on the separate data channel to maximize bandwidth and system efficiency by placing all the supplemental data on one channel. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include the claimed limitation to maximize bandwidth and system efficiency.

Jones fails to disclose a coupon channel comprising “one of a plurality of different user-viewable channels” and “presentation on the another of the plurality of different channels” and “displaying the offered coupon on the coupon channel via the display screen”.

In analogous art, Harada discloses a broadcasting system which provides a user with coupons on a separate channel see ¶ [0063 - 0064] and teaches “...*and the coupon information is displayed as a coupon visible to the user on the EPG screen 16...*” (see ¶ [0086]) and thus it is noted that Harada teaches displaying coupon information received on a second channel. Harada further teaches “If the user decides that the coupon is unnecessary when watching the message of the DM, the coupon is cancelled, and is thus not settled” (see ¶ [0096]). Harada still further teaches an object of the present invention is to “...increase the degree of freedom of issuing a coupon...” (see ¶ [0008]) and to “increase a frequency of use of coupons given to a program or the user” (see ¶ [0009]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include the claimed limitations for

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the benefit of giving the user the option of deciding if printing the coupon is necessary or not while increasing the degree of freedom of issuing a coupon and increasing the frequency of use of coupons.

Claim 38 is met by the above discussions.

Regarding claims 39 and 42, Jones discloses wherein offering the coupon comprises offering the coupon during a television program that is presented on a channel different from the coupon channel (see col. 2, line 63 - col. 3, line 8).

Regarding claims 40 and 43, Jones fails to disclose the claimed wherein notification is capable of being provided to a device different from the client terminal.

Jones suggests the user of sending information to a smart card (as discussed above). Official notice is taken that it would have been well known to send notification information to another portable device like a remote control, PDA, or pager etc. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify Jones to include the claimed limitations for the benefit of providing a notification to a portable handheld device which is easily accessible by a user.

Regarding claim 44, Jones discloses printing the coupons (see col. 10, lines 16-30).

5. Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 11, 13 and 22 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones (US 5,978,013), in view of Harada et al (US 2002/0120927), in further view of Lemon et al (US 4,674,041), and in further view of Platt (US 2002/0138349).

Regarding claim 1, Jones discloses an apparatus, article of manufacture and method for generating product coupons in response to televised offers. Jones discloses advertising programming may offer a coupon for the product advertised (see col. 4, lines 60-65) by

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embedding a coupon identifier in a television video signal (see col. 4, lines 60-65). Jones still further discloses that transmitted advertising program may be broadcast by standard television (see col. 12, lines 54-57), which inherently includes a 'first channel of an interactive video casting system'. It is noted that the user can input a request on a remote control for the coupon (see col. 12, lines 25-47) providing for an interactive system.

Jones further discloses transmitting a coupon or token identifier in the blanked line and hence the same channel as the product advertisement (see col. 2, lines 63-67) to retrieve coupon information on a second distinct data channel (see col. 3, lines 1-9). It is noted that the token identifier comprises a code which links or correlates the token identifier of the advertisement displayed on the first channel to a coupon received on the second data channel (see col. 2, line 63 - col. 3, line 9; col. 5, lines 8-29; and col. 9, lines 30-48). It is noted that Jones discloses "This token information is either transmitted to the viewer's site or pre-stored in a memory at the user's site" (see col. 3, lines 1-8).

Jones discloses a user can request or 'command' retrieval of the coupon, based on the coupon or token identification code, by inputting a command on a remote control (see col. 9, lines 21-29), which provides retrieval of the coupon on the second or data channel to allow printing or utilization of the coupon thus enabling a user to initiate a transaction related to the coupon on the second channel (see col. 10, lines 16-30).

Jones fails to disclose "wherein the second channel is viewable and navigable by the user."

In analogous art, Harada discloses a broadcasting system which provides a user with coupons on a separate channel see ¶ [0063 - 0064] and teaches "...and the coupon information is

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displayed as a coupon visible to the user on the EPG screen 16...” (see ¶ [0086]) and thus it is noted that Harada teaches displaying coupon information received on a second channel. Harada further teaches “If the user decides that the coupon is unnecessary when watching the message of the DM, the coupon is cancelled, and is thus not settled” (see ¶ [0096]). Harada still further teaches an object of the present invention is to “...increase the degree of freedom of issuing a coupon...” (see ¶ [0008]) and to “increase a frequency of use of coupons given to a program or the user” (see ¶ [0009]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include the claimed limitations for the benefit of giving the user the option of deciding if printing the coupon is necessary or not while increasing the degree of freedom of issuing a coupon and increasing the frequency of use of coupons.

Jones fails to disclose the claimed “providing a notification to a user of an expiration date of a coupon separate from the expiration date printed on the coupon.”

In analogous art, Lemon teaches a method and apparatus for controlling the distribution of coupons and further teaches, “...*said host central processing unit further including means for periodically transmitting to each terminal coupon limits such as and including expiration date...*” (see col. 33, lines 34 - 37). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include providing a notification to a user of an expiration date of a coupon separate from the expiration date printed on the coupon for the benefit of periodically alerting a user to the expiration date of the coupon to ensure the user uses the coupon before it expires.

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Jones fails to disclose the claimed “automatically generating a reminder of an upcoming coupon expiration date.”

In analogous art, Platt teaches a method and apparatus for controlling the distribution of coupons and further teaches, “...*In these offers the existence and presence of the original UNOC [Uniquely Numbered Offer Code] number is highlighted and can be promoted as an “electronic coupon”, constantly reminding the interested prospect of the present terms and sense of urgency (expiration date) of that offer.*” (see ¶ [0118]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include automatically generating a reminder of an upcoming coupon expiration date for the benefit of alerting or notifying a user to the expiration date of the coupon to ensure the user uses the coupon before it expires without requiring a user to manually enter a reminder.

Regarding claim 2, the combination of Jones and Harada discloses the claimed limitation, wherein Jones discloses the interactive system is a television system (see col. 4, lines 33-39) and Harada discloses the claimed wherein the information included with the television program on the first channel includes triggers that announce availability of the coupon on the second channel (see ¶ [0070]).

Regarding claim 4, the combination of Jones, Harada and Lemon fails to disclose the claimed wherein linking the first channel to the second channel over at least a portion of the television program, generating a picture-in-picture arrangement to concurrently present the content on the second channel with the television program on the first channel, or tuning from the first channel to the second channel to replace presentation of the television program with presentation of the content.

Official notice is taken it would have well known to overlay supplemental content on program content to enable a user to view both content simultaneously. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art, at the time the invention was made to modify the combination of Jones, Harada and Lemon to include the claimed limitation to enable a user to simultaneously view the commercial advertisement with the coupon.

Regarding claim 5, the combination of Jones and Harada discloses the claimed limitation, wherein Jones discloses demographic information or user-related data which includes ages, consumption habits etc. which is utilized with respect to linking and retrieving coupons (see col. 9, lines 4-19) and wherein Harada discloses the claimed wherein the user-related data can be automatically obtained by receiving an identifier of a client terminal of the user (see ¶ [0064] and ¶ [0068]).

Regarding claim 9, Jones discloses providing coupons on a separate different channel and thus suggests that transmitting of information need not be limited to one channel. It would have been obvious to modify the combination of Jones, Harada and Lemon to include sending the coupon notification on a coupon on a channel different from the second channel. Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify Jones to include the claimed limitation for the benefit of providing a user with coupon expiration information on a data channel which is separate from the program channel and thus maximizing bandwidth efficiency by balancing the transmission of data on a variety of channels.

Regarding claim 11, Jones discloses an image memory for storing the coupon before printing (see col. 10, lines 16-30).

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Regarding claim 13, Jones discloses a printing device for printing and redeeming the coupon (see col. 10, lines 16-30). Jones further discloses generating a token or “coupon” (see col. 1, lines 12-16) and the generator may produce tokens or coupons in the form of a smart card (see col. 2, lines 58-63). Necessarily, Jones discloses transferring information related to the coupon to a smart card.

Claim 22 is met by the rejection of claim 1 as described above.

6. Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones (US 5,978,013), in view of Harada et al (US 2002/0120927), in view of Lemon et al (US 4,674,041), in view of Platt (US 2002/0138349), and in further view of Wehmeyer (US 6,169,543).

Regarding claim 8, the combination of Jones, Harada, Lemon and Platt fails to disclose the claimed obtaining from the user a preference for a date to be notified of the expiration data of the coupon.

In analogous art, Wehmeyer teaches a system and method wherein a user can input preference information as to what date and time to be automatically notified and reminded about important information (see Fig. 5A). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones, Harada, Lemon and Platt to include the claimed limitation for the benefit of being notified as to the expiration date of the coupon at a time preference of the user, to ensure that the user uses the coupon before it expires.

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7. Claims 10 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones (US 5,978,013), in view of Harada et al (US 2002/0120927), in view of Lemon et al (US 4,674,041), in view of Platt (US 2002/0138349), as applied to the claims above, and further in view of Walkingshaw et al (US 5,488,423).

Regarding claim 10, Jones discloses retrieving and printing the appropriate coupon based on a code and thus discloses the claimed “wherein the transaction related to the coupon includes searching for one or more coupons” (see col. 9, lines 30-67 and col. 10, lines 16-30). The combination of Jones, Harada and Lemon fails to disclose searching based on one or more of a user-selected merchant category, a user-selected service category, or a user-provided keyword.

In analogous art, Walkingshaw teaches a home communication system for receiving coupons and teaches “...*the consumer receives coupons or other printed matter only for categories of products or types of information pre-selected by the consumer*” (see col. 2, lines 28-31). Therefore, it would have been obvious to modify the combination of Jones, Harada and Lemon to include the claimed limitation for the benefit of providing a user with a coupons which are most desired and useful to a user.

Regarding claim 12, Jones discloses sorting the plurality of coupons in an order for a viewer to select (see col. 10, lines 50-67).

In analogous art, Walkingshaw teaches method and apparatus for sorting coupons according to categories selected by a user (see col. 2, lines 50-56). Walkingshaw is evidence that sorting coupons according to a category would have been well known. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include the claimed limitation for the benefit of providing coupons preferable to a user.

8. Claims 15-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Jones (US 5,978,013), in view of Harada et al (US 2002/0120927), in view of Lemon et al (US 4,674,041), in view of Platt (US 2002/0138349), as applied to the claims above, and further in view of Fortenberry et al (US 6,336,098).

Regarding claims 15 and 16, the combination of Jones, Harada and Lemon fails to disclose wherein the transaction related to the coupon includes redeeming the coupon and wherein redeeming the coupon includes redeeming the coupon on a merchant web site.

Official Notice is taken it would have been notoriously well known in the art the use of PCTV or web TV with a virtual channel would provide a viewer with a access to wide variety of programming and resources which would include e-shopping or shopping on the Internet. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify the existing TV in Jones to a PCTV or web TV with a virtual channel to provide a user with access to a wide variety of resources thereby enhancing a user's viewing experience.

In analogous art, Fortenberry et al teaches a method for electronic distribution and redemption of coupons on the world wide web (see Abstract). Fortenberry further teaches "*With the growth of the Internet, e-commerce and secure transactions, more consumers are purchasing items over the Internet*" (see col. 1, lines 51-55). It would have been obvious to modify Jones to include allowing a user to redeem the coupon on a virtual channel (a separate channel) coupled to the Internet and merchant web site for the benefit of providing a user with discounts which are redeemable over a widely accessible network offering secure transactions. Therefore, it would

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have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to modify Jones to include the claimed “redeeming the coupon and wherein redeeming the coupon includes redeeming the coupon on a merchant web site” for the benefit of enabling a user to redeem coupons from home over a secure, widely accessible network.

Allowable Subject Matter

9. Claims 45 and 46 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Conclusion

Applicant’s amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Mankoff (US 6,385,591) – Discloses a system and method for generating coupons and a data file including an expiration date and reminder data.

Perkes et al (US 2002/0052788) – Discloses a system and method for generating coupons where the user can set a reminder to use a coupon before expiration, or the user can be automatically notified of coupons soon to expire.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Michael W. Hoye whose telephone number is **571-272-7346**. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 5 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Miller, can be reached at **571-272-7353**.

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Michael W. Hoye
September 14, 2006



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